

Seeking comments on proposed VSP Supplemental Budget Guidelines, comments due by July 1

The Conservation Commission (Commission) has proposed guidelines for the FY 21-23 supplemental VSP funding it received from the legislature and is seeking comment on them. The draft guidelines are available on the [Commission's VSP web page](#) under the "What's New" section, as well as under the *Implementation* tab on the [VSP Implementation web page](#).

The due date for comments is 5:00 pm on July 1, 2022. Please use the [VSP Supplemental Budget Guidelines Comment form](#) to submit your comments.

The Commission also hosted an informational webinar on the draft Guidelines. VSP stakeholders were invited to the webinar, which reviewed the supplemental VSP funding the Commission received from the legislature, examined the timeline for spending the funds, and discussed the proposed guidelines for receiving funds for VSP projects. SCC staff were available to answer questions, and hear feedback. That webinar has been posted on the [Commission's VSP web page](#) under the "What's New" section, as well as under the *Implementation* tab on the [VSP Implementation web page](#).

IMPORTANT: The Commission intends to adopt the draft guidelines at its July 21, 2022 regular meeting. The guidelines would be in effect as of that date.

Your input helps inform our policies

As you may know, a process has been developed by the Commission to review various agency policies. These policies include those that are specific to internal agency activities (such as personnel policies), policies relating to interactions between the Commission and conservation districts (such as grants policies), and policy positions taken by the Commission. As part of the review process approved by the Commission, policy proposals impacting CDs must be submitted to districts for their review and comment prior to the Commission's final action.

Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns. Thank you for your participation in this very important process.

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VSP Supplemental Budget Guidelines Summary

The Washington State Legislature appropriated \$3,000,000 in supplemental capital funds for the Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP) for the FY 22-23 biennium. SCC has not received supplemental funding for VSP in the past, nor has SCC had enough VSP funding for on-the-ground projects. Because of this new funding, SCC staff created the VSP supplemental funding guidelines. The guidelines purpose is to set out the procedures for counties and Conservation Districts for cost-share to eligible landowners for VSP on-the-ground projects. The guidelines utilize existing SCC grant procedures (including CPDS) and includes VSP-specific criteria. SCC staff will review each application, monitor the effect of the criteria on the number of projects seeking funding, and propose modifications to these guidelines if sufficient funding is available to expand the program's scope. Complete details are available in the guidelines.

VSP Supplemental Budget Guidelines Details

The SCC is committed to supporting private landowner's voluntary stewardship of natural resources through the Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP). The legislature has appropriated \$3,000,000 in supplemental capital funds for the VSP for the FY 22-23 biennium.

This opportunity provides funding for projects that protect critical areas while maintaining agricultural viability, with a focus on salmon habitat. The will begin accepting project applications after adopting the final guidelines on July 21, 2022.

Proposals must meet criteria set out in the SCC's VSP supplemental funding guidelines. The guidelines utilize existing SCC grant procedures (including CPDS) and includes VSP-specific criteria. All proposals must be entered into the SCC's CPDS system to be considered for funding.

Proposals will be considered on a monthly basis. Proposals must meet a VSP county work plan goal or benchmark, and must also address salmon habitat resource needs/impacts. Complete details are available in the guidelines.